

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 RABAT 04430 121649Z

42

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----- 080603

P 121221Z SEP 75
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6457

S E C R E T RABAT 4430

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

EXDIS

NEA/AFN PLEASE PASS AMBASSADOR NEUMANN PRIORITY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS PFOR MO
SUBJECT: U.S. TANKS AND MUSLO PERSONNEL TO OUJDA IN NOVEMBER?

REF: CHMUSLO 111635Z SEP 75

1. AS REFTTEL INDICATES, ROYAL MOROCCAN ARMY (RMA) HAS DEVELOPED PLANS TO MOVE THE 26 M48A3 TANKS IT RECEIVED FROM US LAST OCTOBER FROM CASABLANCA TO OUJDA IN EASTERN MOROCCO NEXT NOVEMBER. TO EFFECT THIS SHIFT RMA HOPES TO BORROW 10 TANK TRANSPORTERS (M746 TRUCK TRACTOR AND M747 SEMI-TRAILER) FROM EUCOM, WHICH MIGHT BE FLOWN HERE IN C-5 AIRCRAFT. U.S. PERSONNEL WOULD PRESUMABLY DRIVE THE TRANSPORTERS WITH THE TANKS TO OUJDA. ONCE IN OUJDA TANKS WOULD BE INTEGRATED IN EXISTING RMA ARMORED GROUP THERE AND TRANSPORTERS FLOWN BACK TO EUCOM (GOM HAS ORDERED ITS OWN TANK TRANSPORTERS UNDER EXISTING FMS PROGRAM BUT WAS TOLD THEY WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR DELIVERY UNTIL MAY 1976).

2. SEEMS QUITE POSSIBLE TO US THAT BY NOVEMBER OF THIS YEAR MOROCCO'S DISPUTE WITH SPAIN OVER SPANISH SAHARA WILL BE FURTHER INTENSIFIED, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW KING'S RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT TO HIS PEOPLE (RABAT 4058) THAT WHILE HE IS WILLING TO WAIT FOR THE ICJ TO PRODUCE ITS OPINION, MOROCCO

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 RABAT 04430 121649Z

WILL INSIST ON RESOLUTION OF SAHARA ISSUE BEFORE THE END OF

THIS CALENDAR YEAR, BY PEACEFUL MEANS IF POSSIBLE, BUT BY OTHER MEANS IF NECESSARY. GIVEN SPAIN'S CONTINUING RESENTMENT OF U.S. ARMY SUPPLY PROGRAM TO MOROCCO AT PRESENT TIME, ARGUMENT MIGHT BE MADE THAT OUR REGIONAL INTERESTS WOULD BE BETTER SERVED BY STALLING ON THE TRANSPORTERS, THUS FORCING RMA TO LET THE TANKS STAY IN CASABLANCA RATHER THAN REMINDING THE SPANIARDS OF THEIR EXISTENCE BY MAKING CONSPICUOUS EFFORT TO HELP RMA TAKE THEM OUT OF STORAGE AND MOVE THEM ACROSS COUNTRY FOR INTEGRATION INTO COMBAT UNITS.

3. CONCERNED ELEMENTS OF COUNTRY TEAM HAVE WEIGHED THIS ISSUE AND COME TO FOLLOWING CONCLUSION: THE BEST ASSURANCE WE COULD POSSIBLY GIVE TO GOS AT THIS JUNCTURE THAT OUR TANKS WILL NOT BE USED AGAINST THEM IN ANY CONFLICT OVER SAHARA WOULD BE TO HELP RMA SHIFT THEM TO OUJDA ON SCHEDULE. OUJDA IS TWICE AS FAR FROM CONFLICT ZONE IN SOUTH AS CASABLANCA. ONCE THEY ARE IN OUJDA, IT WILL BE ALMOST PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO MOVE THEM BACK, EITHER TO CASABLANCA OR SOUTH, WITHOUT THE SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT MUSLO IS TRYING TO BORROW FROM EUCOM ON A ONE-TIME BASIS TO GET THEM THERE. IN EFFECT, THEREFORE, PLAN TO MOVE THEM IN NOVEMBER PRECLUDES THEIR TRANSFER TO SOUTH UNTIL AT LEAST NEXT MAY WHEN RMA IS SCHEDULED TO RECEIVE ITS OWN TANK TRANSPORTERS. SPANISH ATTACHES IN RABAT KNOWN TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT CONTINUED PRESENCE OF U.S. TANKS IN CASABLANCA AND POSSIBILITY OF THEIR EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTH IF MOROCCANS BECAME DESPERATE; ASSUME ATTACHES REFLECT FEARS OF THEIR MILITARY SERVICE. THIS MOVE TO OUJDA THEREFORE COULD SERVE TO STRENGTHEN OUR POSITION VIS-A-VIS SPAIN THAT OUR MILITARY PROGRAM TO MOROCCO DOES NOT IMPACT ON MILITARY BALANCE BETWEEN MOROCCO AND SPAIN IN SAHARA AREA. WE SHOULD NO DOUBT ANTICIPATE, HOWEVER, THAT MOVE OF U.S. TANKS TO OUJDA AREA WILL EXCITE ALGERIANS; HOWEVER, THIS BOUND TO HAPPEN WHATEVER TIME FRAME OF MOVE OF TANKS TO EAST.

4. IF WE GO AHEAD WITH PLAN TO ASSIST MOROCCANS IN MOVING THE U.S. TANKS TO THE OUJDA AREA BELIEVE IT ESSENTIAL THAT WE APPRISE SPANISH HERE IN RABAT AND MADRID SHORTLY BEFORE MOVE TAKES PLACE. TRANSFER INVOLVING C-5'S OR OTHER MEANS WILL IN ANY CASE BECOME KNOWN TO GOS. WE ARE CONVINCED IT

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 RABAT 04430 121649Z

WOULD BE BETTER TO ALLAY SPANISH FEARS IN ADVANCE THAN TO HAVE TO REPLY TO EXCITED SPANISH QUERIES DURING OR AFTER THE MOVE.

5. WE RECOMMEND THEREFORE THAT DEPARTMENT CONSIDER LENDING ITS SUPPORT TO MUSLO REQUEST FOR LOAN OF EUCOM TANK TRANSPORTERS IN NEAR FUTURE. (IF FOREGOING ARGUMENT CONSIDERED SUFFICIENTLY RELEVANT, FOR EXAMPLE, DEPARTMENT MIGHT CONSIDER URGING DOD TO MAKE LOAN OF TANK TRANSPORTERS PART OF EUCOM

TRAINING EXERCISE IN ORDER TO CUT DOWN COSTS TO GOM; OTHERWISE MOROCCANS, WHO HAVE NOT YET BEEN GIVEN ANY ESTIMATES, MIGHT FIND COST PROHIBITIVE AND DECIDE TO LEAVE TANKS IN CASABLANCA UNTIL NEXT YEAR AFTER ALL. IF GOM IS FACED WITH DELAY OF TANK TRANSFER TO OUJDA, RMA MIGHT DECIDE TO BEGIN TANK TRAINING IN CASABLANCA WHICH LIKELY TO ADD TO SPANISH NERVOUSNESS.)

6. FURTHER POSSIBLE POLICY ISSUE RAISED BY MUSLO PLANS TO HAVE VERY SMALL TEAMS (UP TO 5 PERSONNEL) IN OUJDA WHILE OUR TANKS ARE BEING INTEGRATED INTO UNITS THERE (REFTEL). THIS APPEARS ESSENTIAL TO EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION OF TANKS AND IT WOULD BE HARD TO EXPLAIN TO MOROCCANS ANY APPARENT RELUCTANCE ON OUR PART TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL TRAINING PERSONNEL ONCE TANKS HAVE ARRIVED, EVEN IF POLITICAL SITUATION AT THAT TIME MIGHT BE DELICATE. HOWEVER, THIS IS SITUATION WE OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO CONTROL ON ALMOST A DAILY BASIS, IF NEED BE WITHDRAWING MUSLO PERSONNEL FROM OUJDA AREA, IF, FOR EXAMPLE, RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA APPEAR TO BE GETTING UNDULY TENSE.

7. STATIONING OF OUR 26 TANKS IN OUJDA SHOULD HAVE NO APPRECIABLE EFFECT ON LOCAL MILITARY BALANCE BETWEEN MOROCCAN AND ALGERIAN FORCES, OTHER THAN TO GIVE MOROCCANS SLIGHTLY BETTER DEFENSE CAPABILITY, SINCE ACCORDING TO OUR INFORMATION ALGERIA WILL IN ANY CASE RETAIN VERY CONSIDERABLE SUPERIORITY IN TERMS OF ARMOR AND RELATED EQUIPMENT. DEPT AND EMBASSY ALGIERS ARE OF COURSE IN BEST POSITION TO JUDGE POTENTIAL POLITICAL IMPACT IN ALGERIA.

8. AS WHEELS ARE ALREADY IN MOTION ON TANK TRANSFER, DEPT WILL NO DOUBT WISH TO GIVE THIS ISSUE URGENT STUDY.

9. DEPT MAY WISH PASS THIS MESSAGE TO ALGERIS AND MADRID.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 RABAT 04430 121649Z

COON

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, TANKS (COMBAT VEHICLES), MILITARY PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975RABAT04430
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750316-0979
From: RABAT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750957/aaaabypo.tel
Line Count: 155
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 JUN 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <26 NOV 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S. TANKS AND MUSLO PERSONNEL TO OUJDA IN NOVEMBER?
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, MO, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006